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AUTHOR Jones, Frances
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ABSTRACT

This booklet outlines the instructions for 10 games that have proved to be effective in English for speakers of other languages (ESOL) courses. The games presented are divided into four categories: dialog games, vocabulary games, structure focus, and pronunciation practice. "The Chain Game" calls for students to take turns asking each other questions, always repeating the response given by the previous player before posing the question to the next player. The second dialog game allows students to demonstrate reading comprehension by matching pictures with stories. A vocabulary game called "Is It?" gives students the opportunity to practice a common question-and-answer pattern and simple descriptions. Four structure focus games are described: "Cooperative Sentences" (which teaches sequential sentence order), "What Happened?" (in which students increase reading comprehension by acting out character roles and gain cultural insight as they role-play); "Where Is It?" (designed to increase students' comprehension of prepositions); and "Colored Sentences" (in which students learn the proper placement of modifiers in English sentences). The three pronunciation games--"Hearing and Writing," "Say-Show," and "Vowel Bingo"--allow students to get immediate feedback on their pronunciation accuracy. (MN)

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MY 10 FAVORITE ESOL TEACHING GAMES

by

Frances Jones

CE050430

The purpose of teaching with games is to stimulate spontaneous conversation, to practice English speech patterns and pronunciation, and to provide an informal teaching atmosphere where the student takes a leading role in the teaching-learning process.

These games are designed for beginning students and beginning tutors.

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Frances Jones
1800 South Maple
Carthage, MO 64836

Instructions for

MY 10 FAVORITE TEACHING GAMES FOR ESOL

DIALOG GAMES

1. Chain Games
2. Matching Pictures with Stories

VOCABULARY GAME

3. Is It...?

STRUCTURE FOCUS GAMES

4. Cooperative Sentences
5. What Happened?
6. Where Is It?
7. Colored Sentences

PRONUNCIATION PRACTICE

8. Hearing and Writing
9. Say-Show
10. Vowel Bingo

DIALOG GAMES

Chain Games

First Person: "I'm going to..., are you going too?"

Second Person: "No, I'm not. I'm going to..."

or

"Yes, I am." (Turns to third person.)

"I'm going to___. Are you going too?"

Game continues.

Teacher: "Are you going to class?"

Student to another student: "I'm staying home. Are you going?"

Second student to first student: "No, I'm not."

(Turns to third student.)

"(name)'s staying home. Are you going?"

Third student to second student: "No, I'm not."

Third student to fourth student: "(name)'s staying home.

Are you going?"

Game continues.

In these games students practice simple questions and answers practice names, practice location names, have an opportunity to vary dialog by adding explanations. Correct intonation is important in these games.

Use the same format for other question-answer games.

Matching Pictures with Stories

Prepare a story and a large number of pictures cut from magazines, only some of which illustrate the story. Give students the story to read and ask them to choose the picture that goes with the story, then ask them to explain why they chose that picture.

Students demonstrate reading comprehension by selecting correct pictures and practice spontaneous speaking.

VOCABULARY GAME

Is It...?

Student chooses an object in the room. He doesn't tell what it is. Tutor and students ask, "Is it...?" until the object is identified. The student who guesses correctly chooses an object and the game continues.

Variation:

Student describes one characteristic of the object at a time beginning with, "It's (color.)

He answers questions with "Yes, it is," or "No, it isn't," and adds another bit of description, "It's (color) and it's (shape.)

The game continues with student next describing location and then size.

Students practice a common question and answer pattern and simple descriptions as they use new or known vocabulary words.

STRUCTURE FOCUS GAMES

Cooperative Sentences

Put words or phrases of a sentence on cards. Give each student one or more cards. Students arrange cards on a table to make the sentence. They read the sentence.

Variations:

Students arrange themselves into a line so that the words they hold form a sentence.

Let students work with a number of sentences, one at a time, then arrange the completed sentences into a paragraph.

Students learn sequential sentence order, they practice speaking English in discussing word positions, and have practice in cooperative effort.

What Happened?

Have catalog or magazine figures and furniture (reinforced with heavy paper) to represent family members and household activities. Prepare a set of materials for each student.

Write a two or three sentence paragraph telling who is acting and what is happening. Ask the student to read the paragraph silently, then to pantomine, telling the story, with paper figures. One by one he adds appropriate conversation for each actor.

Variations:

1. Several students each take a character and work out the activity and conversation. They each take a role and role play the situation.

2. One student pantomines the activity, using the figures. Other students guess what is happening and tell in English what they think has happened.

Students increase reading comprehension by acting out characters' roles, and gain cultural insight as they role play.

Where Is It?

Ask students to sit around a table or in chairs arranged in a circle. In the center are several objects which are nouns in current vocabulary. The first student arranges two or more of the objects - putting a cup in a box, a lemon beside a pencil, for example. The student who did the arranging chooses a second student to describe the arrangement. The student who was chosen to describe arranges the next series and chooses someone to describe it.

Students increase comprehension of prepositions and practice using them correctly in a sentence.

Colored Sentences

Prepare several simple sentences this way: Put each word of a sentence on a card. Print the subject noun in red. Print the verb in blue. Print words and phrases modifying the noun in pink. Print words and phrases modifying the verb in light blue.

Ask students to arrange one sentence at a time into proper order. They are to discover that English sentences fall into two parts, the noun and its modifiers at the beginning of the sentence, and the verb with its modifiers at the end of the sentence.

Sentence example: The big man is running up the stairs.

Red: man

Pink: The, big

Blue: is running

Light blue: up the street

Note: Sentences with direct objects are too complicated to color code for beginning students.

Students learn the proper placement of modifiers in English sentences.

PRONUNCIATION PRACTICE

Hearing and Writing

One student writes at the chalkboard or newsprint as other students, one at a time, dictate numbers or words.

Begin with number 13, 30, 14, 40 etc.

Variation:

Dictate letter sounds, asking student to write the letter.

Students get immediate feedback on the accuracy of their pronunciation of numbers, sounds or words.

Say-Show

Each player, one of them the game leader, will need a set of cards.

A set of letter cards is 16 3x5 cards having the same letter on both sides. Letters c, k, g, f, v, d, t, b, p, s, z, a, e, i, o, u are used. Other letters having sounds the student needs to practice may be added. The leader's set has the same letters, but on one side only.

One student is the game leader. His cards are stacked on the table, face down. Each players' cards (including the tutor's) are arranged in front of him.

The leader picks a card and looks at it without showing the letter to the other players. He makes the sound of his letter.

The other players hold up the letter card that matches the sound they heard.

The leader turns his card face out so that players can see the letter and check (1) the correctness of their response and (2) the accuracy of the leader's pronunciation.

Leadership of the game is rotated among the students and tutor.

Variations:

1. Use cards with numbers 13, 30, 14, 40, 15, 50, 16, 60, 17, 70, 18, 80, 19 and 90.

2. Use cards with vocabulary words.

Vowel Bingo

Make enough bingo cards with vowel letters across the top for each student to have one or two. Each card must be different.

List five numbers from the following groups under each letter - a, e, i, o, u.

a - 1-19

e - 20-39

i - 40-59

o - 60-79

u - 80-99

Make bingo calling tokens corresponding with the numbering system (a-1, a-2, a-3, a-4 etc. e-20, e-21 etc.)

A student is the caller. Play proceeds as in regular bingo. Winner is the next caller. Caller calls vowel sound, not letter.

Variations:

1. Use directional words and shapes in the vocabulary - square, corner, across, down, left, right, etc.

2. Use consonant blend sounds in place of vowel sounds.

Students hear vowel sounds, locate visually, hear numbers and locate. As leader they practice saying vowel sounds.